

## **ARTHRITIS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**May 19, 2021**

**5:00 – 6:00 pm**

### **Committee Members Present**

Rachel Pigott (Chair)

Dr. Afton Thomas

Linda Kline

### **Committee Members Absent**

Dr. Sumit Bassi

Salliann Alborn

### **Maryland Department of Health Staff Present**

Dr. Olubukola Alonge

#### **1. Welcome**

Rachel called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm by welcoming members. Initially, there was no quorum but once quorum was attained with 3 members, a motion to approve the April minutes was made by Rachel and approved by all members present.

#### **2. Discussion**

Members discussed about the spring walk for the cure event which several members participated in; Rachel walked in person with another HWC member and the parent of a child with arthritis. They had great conversations about the work the child with arthritis and her family does in the community and Rachel shared with the committee her thoughts about collaborating with the family on an initiative which seemed agreeable to members present. Linda also shared about how receptive people were to donate to the arthritis foundation during the event. Members thought the platforms for engaging individuals to participate in the walk were great, but suggestions were made for improvement. Rachel also suggested that we create t-shirts for the arthritis committee that can be used during any of our events including partnerships with other organizations like the Arthritis Foundation. This was a welcome idea by members. Committee members also discussed the short timeline for disseminating messaging for the walk on member social media platforms despite a request for approval at least a month previously. The plan is to send all messaging for approval earlier in the year – months ahead so the committee can have them archived and ready for dissemination. The AOTA messaging has also been approved and provided to committee members who were encouraged to disseminate on their organizational and individual social media platforms. Buki was asked if this will also be posted on the MDH website and social media platforms; Buki will check with Kristi for approval. Rachel will also check with Dr. Afton on the creative considerations document she is working on and provide updates at the next meeting.

Next, there was a discussion about the new protocol for some messaging approval that will require approval by only Kristi and Jessica, the chair of the HWC and the need for members to select what months they would like to be the lead on the messaging efforts of the council. Members selected May and October and are yet to determine the third month they would like to be the lead the initiative. Buki shared with the team a non-exhaustive list that has the themes for every month to guide the decision. A conversation was also had about having more individuals with arthritis on the committee and a suggestion for a younger person was made. Members need to think through the implications of having a youth participate since they will likely need to have a consenting adult or parent present at every meeting as well.

Please see below some thoughts shared by Linda after the last meeting:

*“I was thinking about our creative considerations for social media postings and the more I think about it, the more I am wondering if it wouldn't be a good idea to do up a creative consideration for Special Olympics Maryland. My son about 2 weeks ago just completed his Certified Athlete Leadership Advanced courses with a graduation ceremony next week. But one of their topics, especially through their last class was simply who should they partner with or contact to get more health information for our disabled athlete population. We actually have a program called Healthy Athletes, we have Athletes who are Health Messengers and my son suggested that SOMD reach out to the Maryland Health and Wellness Council since we promote health through Fitness, Arthritis Information, etc.....I would say about 50% or more of the Special Olympic Community athlete wise have a diagnosis of some type of Arthritis, then when you add in the numbers from our coaches, volunteers, management team, etc....that percentage then grows.*

*What are everyone else's thoughts on this?”*

### 3. **Next Steps**

- Rachel will follow up with Dr. Afton on the CC she is working on – Done and will provide updates at the next meeting
- Buki will check with Kristi about placing messaging on MDH social media platforms – Discussed with Kristi – not at the moment, members are encouraged to continue disseminating on their individual platforms as well as organizational and partner platforms; however, these messages will be approved by the Council Chair.

### 4. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:55 pm

**Next Meeting:** June 16, 2021; 5:00 – 6:00 PM